The purpose of this meeting is to act on the application of Comrade Milt Zaslow, for readmittance into the party. What are the questions that need to be answered in order to arrive at a decision? First, what are the requirements for membership? The party constitution states: "Every person who accepts the program of the party, and agrees to ;submit to its discipline and engage actively in its work, shall be eligible to membership." Comrade George Novack writing in the July3, 1972 Intercontinental press, states; Whoever ag rees with the programmatic positions and perspectives of the party and acts in a disciplined way to implement them is eligible to join its ranks." Comrade Zaslow states unequivocally that he is in general agreement with all the programmatic positions of the party, would have no difficulty whatever in actively supporting and advocatin its policies, is fully prepared to abide by its discipline and is ready andeager to participate actively and loyally in building the party. Unless these affirmations are false or insincere, that should settle the question. Yet the wub-committee report challenges none of these statements. In spite of 6 hours of grilling, the committee was unable to come up ;with a single difference which can possibly be characterized as "programmatic"; nor has it presented a scrapof evidence to cast any doubt on Milt's readiness to carry out party policies, to abide by its discipline, and tp loyally buildthe party. Instead, the committee, simply ignoring the constitution, proposes to keep Comrade Zaslow out of the party by arbitrarily setting up a whole series of new, non-c onstitutional re-quire ments, which Milt, alledgedly, doesn't meet.

There were only two references, of any kind, in the report, relating to programmatic questions. One regarding his alleged past "Maoism", which, according to them, "he made a definite break with", as a result of Mao's betrayal of Bangla Desh and Ceylon. This particular assertion is going to come as quite a ;shock toformer LU memb ers. Just imagine, all that time Milt was openly converting us to Trotskyism, he was really a Maoist in disguise. The fact of the matter is, it simply is not true. It wou ldbe enlightening to review, at this point, the political evolution of LU, and Comrade Zaslow's relation to it.

L.U. g rew out of Freinds of the Panthers, and it's true ;that init's early stages, we were very influenced by the Panthers, who in turn were influenced by Mao. When Milt joined Friends of the panthers, he found ;most of us were basically revolutionary minded, but totally inexperienced and ignorant of what Maoism was. For ;us, Maoism meant what we read in the little red book. Others , however, were conscious Maoists, and they, eventuallybroke with L.U. over this Question. But that ;happened long before the Bangla Desh incident. Of course, even if it were true, itWould be totally irrelevant, as is nine-tenths of the report, in whcich they do not contend he is a Maoist now. Furthermore , they present not a speck of evidence to substantiate Zaslow's so-called past"Maoism", because theres not a speck of truth in it. Milt never made a break with Maoism, because he was never a Maoist. This is just another crude attempt by the committee, to cast false insinuations against C omrade Zaslow in hopes that by sheer quantity they will strengthen an otherwise pitifully weak case.

As regards Milt's supposed differences on the the national question. It's interesting ;to note that no quotations from the transcript can be found in the report to substantiate this asserion, because Milt said no such thing. What can be found, in the report, is a short statement by Milt, which the committee itself constructed, by taking two separate and isolated sentences from different sections, and piecing them together as if it were one complete statement. But even that failed to indicate any disagreement ;on the question. Now

then, inorder for there to be no confusion as to what Milt's position is on the national question, I'm going to read you his statement from the transcri pt. Dan asked Milt if he agreed with the partys position on nationalism at the present time. The following is his answer: "Fundamentallyyes. I must say that I have a problem with ;certain aspects of it,in t erms of its correspondence with Lenin's view. That is to say Iam and always have been in full agreement with the concept that struggles for national liberation and self determination areentirely progressive and the party must support and encourage themin every way. The problem I have, and I th;ink needs resolution, and I think The party has not grappled with, is thatLenin's position does not coincide with the partys in two respects. This is without any question of who is right or wrong. But atleast it seems to me that the matter cannot be ignored, because Lenin says, categorically, so that there can be no question about it, that 'Marxists are against nationalism,' in those words. It's nationalism in all forms that hes talking about. Certain aspects of national struggles are progressive and Marxists will support those but never will support nationalism. He says; 'Against national oppression, yes; for nationalism, never.' Naturally Lenin's views are very important to us all and I think the matter has tobe investigated. The second part of it is that he was categoricallyopposed to organizations exclusively based upon nationhood, against organizing either parties, economic organiaztions, social organizations, or educatinal, on the basis of nationality, which raises (of course) the question of the Black party, and the Chicano party. Now it's very possible that this position was correct when applied to the Bund and other formations that he was discussing there, but that hte situation with Chicanos and Blacks is different, possiblybecause of the virtual non-existence of a Black of a Chicano Bourgoeosie, and so on. I consider La Raza Unida to be a progressive development, I'm entirely in favor of the concept that nationalstruggles by oppressed peopled for liberation, against oppression of every kind, and for thneir ;right to self-determination, are not only just, but extremexly progressive. They carry withe them the dynamic fo Anti-capitalist struggle that leads, by the logic of the permanent revolution, to a struggle ;against the capitalist regime."

That should settle the question of "programmatic disagreements" but the committee is not satisfied. They characterize Milt's conception of programmatic agreement as "abstract and nebulous", which they contend, would open the gates of the party to all kinds of people--people ;who, in their words, are "in favor of the proletarian revolution, against capitalism, accept or concetp of the state, the need for socialist democracy, against Stalinism,etc," Now, if we add to this the elements of discipline and loyalty, then what's wrong with that? Don't we want to build a mass revolutionary party, by recruiting all those who are fed up with thiks rotten socirty, and who want to join with other revolutionary socialists to change it? Does loyal adherence to our program mean agreeing entirely with its tactical orientation at any given time?

Let us examine now, just what the Leninist program is. I believe it can be summarized by the following principles:

1. Proletarian Internationalism
2. The class line as our consisten and Principle orientation.
3. The revolutionary road toward socialism.
4. The need for a revolutionary proletarian combat party, based on the Leninsist concept of democratic centralism, to educaxte and lead the m asses to power.
5 Proletatian democracy.

These are the basic principles of a Leninist party. This is the program of our party, which distinguishes us ;from all others on the left.

Those who disagree with any one of these principles cannot call themselves Trotskyists, and don't belong in our movement. This program would exclude the Maoists and the Stalinists, who are not proletatian internationalists, but are guided by narrow minded nationalism, who do not except the class line as a principle orientation, but enter into peoples fronts and engage in class collaboration; who don't believe in proletarian democracy and who substitute peaceful transition forf revolution as the road towards socialims. It would further eclude the social demo crats, for example, who support the state dept.; are in favor of US interventions in S.E. Asia, an who, also engage in class collaboration.

But the committee asks, what about Robertson ;and Wohlforth? The committe says Milt's formula would mean in practice, That Wohlforth and Roberson would be admitted as they apply. Now, it may be true that they call themselves Trotskyists, but what the report fails to mention is that they also consider the SWP to be anti-revolutionary, anti-Marxist, revisionist, etc., and, therefore exclude themselves. The party has always contende that they were expelled because of their disloyal acts, and not because of their views. Presumably, if they could have remianed loyal, disciplined members, there would be no grounds for their exclusion. Furthermore as Marxist we are the most consistent democrats, We give unconditional support to the struggles of oppressed people in this ountry as well as internationally. These ultra-lefts don not, and on that point alone; they are in fundamental disagreement with a programmatic question - in violation of the Leninist principle of prOLETarian internationalism. Therefore, to say that these Leninist principles, which Comrade Zaslow says, correctly, are the essence ;of our program, the program of the Fourth Internationall, are somehow "abstract and nebulous", is in my opinion, either and indication that there is confusion as to what the program of the FI is, or that the comrades ahve some other programmatic principles in mind. If thats the case, I hope they will tell us what they are, so we'll all know.

so much for programmatic questions.

What about Comrade Zaslows readiness to work constructively as a party builer. There is no need to speculate about that. Those of us who were active in the anti-war movement know that he played a central role in both April 22 and January 20 demonstrations, and collaborated loyally with the party. More important, withour even being a member, he helped to build the party in the most meaningful and tangible way. There are eigth members of this branch who are in the party as a direct result of Milt's work. The point is that we all know perfectly well that Milt, with his experience, knowledge and ability, would be a valuable asset to our movement.

Why then does the committee propose to exclude comrade Zaslow from the party? The key factor, ;they contend, is whether or not he cna be assimilated and integrated into the party. But what does integration mean? Does it mean the carrying out of party policy and participating actively in the work of the party, in a loyal and disciplined manner? Or does the committee consider an "assimilated member" as one who is uncritical and unquestioning, and who never disagrees? If that is the case, then Milt is admittedly non-assimilable. But this concept of membership is totally alien to our party. I want to read a quote from comrade Cannon, which appears in the Education for Socialists bulletin, "Defending the Revolutionary Party and its Perspectives". "Trotsky said that a Bolshevik is not only a discoplined man but also an independent thinking man, who will raise hes point of view again and again, until either he convinces the party that he is right, or the party convinces him that he is wrong." Apparently, the committees concept of membership is not in keeping with that of comrades Trotsky and Cannon.

But let's approach this question of integration from another angle. As I stated earlier, we former LU members, joined the party as a result of Milt's influence and at his urging. Our views are essentially similar to h;is. Have we been assimilated and integrated, or are we simply disruptive elements who want to destroy the party? Are we an asset or are we a liability. I think the records will show that we have been among the most active members inthe brach, and have behaved in a loyal and disciplined manner. Why, then, would w expect Milt to behave any differently? If we have behaved as loyal and dedicated ;comrades, it is not because this was contrary to Milt's influence, but precisely because of it.

This point can be clearly illustrated by reading from the transcript the statement Milt ;made during the interview; "When the majority of LU agreed to join the party on the terms that the party ;insisted on, I then gave my final advice to the comrades on how to conduct themselves after joining the party. I made it very clear that once they joined the party, there is no more group; there isn't any sufficient basis for it. ...they should simply go in, work hard, and conduct themselves as good constructive party members." I think that answers, what the committee terms, the"key factor" in determining Milt's membership.

The most fundamental issue in dispute is over the degree of conformity required of party members. This issue was posed most sharply when comrade Zaslow was aked if unanimity on all questions for an extended period of time, would indicate to him, the existence of an unhealthy situation in the party. The comrades on the committee seem to belive that the healthiest party is one in which there it total unanimity all the time, Comrade Zaslow's position is that regardless of how desirable it may be, it is simply not possible to have unanimity on all important questions over a long period of time, in an organization of revolutionaries. And if this wered the case, it would reflect, in his opinion, an unhealthy regime, where differences are discouraged. The committee concludes from this that Milt is opposed to a "relatively homogeneous" party, and favors a muti-tendency party.

Maybe we should stop for a minute and see what these terms mean, homogeneous, and unanimous. The dictionary defines unanimity as based on total and complete agreement, as opposed to homogeneity, which is composed of similar or like elements. But, of course, we're ;not bound by dictionary definitions. Let's see how our party defines relative homogeneity. In the 1965 resolutions of the SWP, the question is dealt with as follows: "We are guided by the Leninist concept of relative internal homogeneity based on loyal adherence to ;the party's program and principles and voluntary acceptance of it's discipline. These qualities enable the party to maintain internal stability and to funciton dynamically in it's public activity, even ;though conjunctural differences arise. Ample room is provided for the expression of dissident views, even major ones of serious import. The right to organize tendencises and factionsxis saf eguarded. All the leadership demands is that every member be loyal to the party's program and principles, and be disciplined."

As we see, "homogenity" is not the same as"unanimity." Why then does the committee use these terms interchangeably, as if one were a syn onym for the other? It's quite possible, actually, to have differences, [illegible] in a relatively homogeneous party. In fact, differences, even tendencies and factional struggles are unavoidable, in a Leninist party. Let us hear Trotsky on this question. Firts from the "Revolution Betrayed": "In reality, the history of Bolshevism is a history of the struggle of factions. And indeed, how could a genuinely revolutionary organization, setting itself the task of overthrowing the world and unitin under its banner the most

audacious iconoclasts, fighters and insurgents, live and develop without inttellectual conflicts, withour groupings and temporary factional formations? The farsightedness of the Bolshevik leadership ofteun made it possible to soften conflicts and shorten the duration of factional struggle, but no more than that. The central committee relied upon this seething democratic support. From this it derived the audacity to make decisions and give orders." Does this sound like the Bolsheviks had unanimity on all questions for any length of time?

In both the 1965 resolution and the quotation by Trotsky, reference is made to tendencies and factions. The sub-committee's report contends that Milt sees no substatntial difference between tendencies and factiosn, What Milt was referring to, was organized tendencies, not loose temporary groupings. The fact of the matter is, there is little or no difference between and organized tendency and a faction. Thats what a faction is, an organized tendency. And far from advocating factions, Milt sees them simply as unavoidable. In his own words, "I for example would counsel comrades who disagree, to ;think a hundred times before organizing a faction, to refrain if at all possible, to carry on their political aims without formal organization, by presenting their views as individuals, or by loose asscociation, gathering together to see what they can agree on, and maybe collaborating on a document.....and only if considered absolutely essential and unavoidable, to organize a faction."

I think at this time it would be beneficial to hear what comrade Trotsky had to say about factions. This passage appears in his writings of 1938-39. It is in answer to Pivert, who ;demanded that the "Trotskyites" abandon their factional methods in the PSOP. This is Trotsky's answer: "What is a faction? It is a temporary non-statutory and voluntary grouping of closest co-thinkers within the party, whose aim is to convince the party of the correctness of their viewpoint in the shortest possible period of time. The appearance ;of factions is unaboidable, even in the most mature and harmonious party, owing to the extension of its influjence upon new layer, the cropping up of new problems, sharp turns in the situation, errors of the leadership, an so on. From the standpoint of monolithism, a factional struggle is an "evil"; but it is and unavoidable evil, and, in any event, a far lesser evil than the prohibition of factions. True enough, attempts at the formation of factions lacking an adequate principles basis inconsequence of political immaturity, personal ambitions, careerism, etc., are frequedntly observeable, especially in young parties. In all such cases it is the task of the leadership to expose, without recourse to police measures, the hollowness of these enterprises, and in that way to discredit them before the party membership. Only in this way, is it possible to create profound attachement for the party, so that episodic conflicts, no matter how sharp, don not threaten it's unity. The existence of factions, in the nature of thing s, provokes friction and involves an expenditure of energy, but this is the inevitable overhead expense of a democratic regime. A capable and authoritative leadership strives to reduce factional struggles to a minimum. This is acheived by a correct policy tested by collective experience; by a loyal attibtude toward the opposition; by the gradually increasing authority of the leadership; but never by prohibition of factions, something which cannot fail to invest the struggle with a hypocritical and poisonous character. Whoever prohibits factions, thereby liquidates party democracy and takes the first step toward a totalitarian regime." Trotsky's definition is explicit, and leaves no room or little, for speculation or interpretation. Does this differ form Kilt's position of Factions?

Now what about the reports contention that comrade Zaslow believes in a multi-tendency party. Again, what he actually seys i that tendencies

like factions, are unavoidable in a Leninist party. Trotsky emphatically says the same! Let's continue reading from the above article: "the entire history of Bolshevism was one of the free struggles of tendencies and factions. The Bolshevik ;central committee never dreamed of demanding that an opponenet abandon factional methods, if the opponent held that the policy of the central committee was false." Doesn't that sound like a multi-tendency party?

Comrade Cannon answers this question unmistakably, in "Ddfending the Revolutionary party and its Prerspectives". In the section entitled, "Factional Struggle and party Leadership," he offers as proof, why, in his opinion, the Bolsheviks were a party and not a faction durin g the period, form 1903 up to the revolution. Comrade Cannon states: "In the essence of the matter, the nucleus of The Bolshvik party of the October revolution, was the Lenin Bolshvik faction. It was a party. And the proof of the fact that it was a party, and not an exclusive faction of Lenin, was that within the Bolshevik faction there were different tendencies. There wecre Left-wing, and right-wing Bolsheviks. At times, some of them openly polemicized with Lenin." Thus Comrade Cannon says, in the cleares possible language, that the multiple tenedencies are the norm for a Leninist party, while a single tendency, or unanimity, is characteristic of a faction. Or we might add a monolithic party.

Now, on the question of Monolithism. The committee staes that Milt "implies" that the party is "monolithic". Since Milt never even used the word once, in reference to the SWP, I can onlyh conclude that the committtee is ovely sensitive on this point. A monolithic party they descrbe, such as the CP under Stalin, was one in whch disagreements were forbidden, factions banned and illegal, and anyone who tied to dissent, risked his of her life. And, as they correctlly maintain, the "SWP is not comparable to Stalin's XXX regime." Now then, I challenge anyone to find one phrase, one sentence, or one word, in the six hours of interrogation, where Milt eve n implies that the party is anything close to what the report just describedd as monolithism. You can't find it, because it's not there. If it were, you can be damn sure the report would have quoted it. According to the original report a monolithic party is synonomous with a Stalinist party. Actually, this is a completely arbitrary and narrow definition. Monolithic, as distinct from homogeneous, means solid, undifferentiated - yes, unanimous. There are numerou s doctrinaire political sects and cults that are completely monolithic, yet don not conform to their definition, e.g., the Black Panther party, Nelson Perry's Communist League, and, in fact the F riends of the Panthers, i.e., prior to Milt's work in correcting what he termed as our "bizaare concept of democratic centralism.

This leads us to the next point. The report claims that Milt thinks the "leadership is overly authoritarian, overly centralized and not really Leninist." And to prove itthey offer the next sentence: "My own view is that the regime in the party is not exactly, it does not conform exactly, to the norms of the L eninist party." Anyone who read the transcript, knows that Milt said this. But anyone with the slightest bit of intellectual curiosity, would want to know in wht context it was made, before drawing any conclusions. So, let's go back to the transcript, and see how and why it was said. Immediately following this quotation, Milt continues: "My own studies of the Leninist party lead me to the conclusion that there was far more open discussion, contorversy in the party than there is in the SWP, although it functioned under conditions which would have warranted a far more stricter regime. That is, before the revolution, it functioned under conditions of either illeglaity or semi-legality, in constant dange of repression, or during a period of war, or during a period of civil war and crises in the country. All of which conditions would have been justification, if

anybody was looking for it, for really repressing differences or minimizing them, or preventing them, and so on. But to the contrary.... there is no question as to what the reality of the internal life of the Bolshevik party was."

He talks more about the open and free atmosphere in Lenin's party, which I will skip over, and go on to his view of the SWP now. "And this I'm talking about the spirit of the thing, I think it's lacking. I think there is a tendency to get very nervous about disagreements, and try to see to it that they are all ;confined within ;this very breif period,, 3 months out of every 2 years. Now, I think the reason for this, is that comrades sincerely believe that this is the best way, the only way, to keep ;the party from tearing itself apart, becoming a debating society, and so on; and believe this is the real way for the Leninist party. I'm sure that htey are sincere about it, and I sincerly believe they are wrong. It's a matter of opinion. It's a matter of approach. I think it's a question, not for or against democratic centralism, at all. I would absolutely insist on democratic centralis m, The question is, what it means."

Now here again, the report claims that "Zaslow also disagrees with our interpretation of democratic centralism". Well, Zaslow's interpretation of democratic centralism, is that during a period of discussion, there is a free and democratic internal party atmosphere, and once a decision has been reached there is unity in action, i.e., there's no debating on the barricades; we confront the outside world with a single united policy. The degree of democracy that is permitted within an organization is determined by the objective conditions surrounding the organization at a given time. Therefore, Milt states, in the transcript, "the party is not under attack, it's not faced with repression or illegality, it's not faced with civil war, it's faced with a prolonged period of rather peaceful operation in which it's fairly free to operate without any great hindrance. And that's the time when the greatest democracy can be not only permitted, but insisted upon, because it's under these circumstances, among other things, that comrades learn the best...the greatest participation in arriving at decisions, is the best way for comrades to learn, get educated and become, therefore, the most effective revolutionaries in fighting for the party's policy." That's Milt's attidtude toward the party, and, I would assume, that most of the comrades here share that attitude. How then does it differ from the party's interpretation of democratic centralism?

It's becoming more and more evident that comrade Zaslow's views are in no way incompabible with party membership. Why then, is he to be dicriminated against? The committee has two grounds for singling Milt out for special treatment. First, because he is an applicant, and according to them we have different criteria for applicants, than for members. That is, you can develop differences once you're in the party, but you can't join if you have these identical differences befor joining. What I'd like to know, is when, where, how, and by whom was this deceded? If rules can be custom made to deprive a comrade of membership in or party, then the party constitution is meaningless. Let me ask you this. What if a group of people, or an individual, want to join our party, who agree entirely with it's program and are will to abide by discipline. However, they do not agree with the majority tendency in the party, i.e., they find themselves in agreement with the Proletarian Orientation. Do we propose to keep them out? According to the committee;s formula, they should not be allowed in, even though they fully met the criteria for membership as outlined in our party constitution.

The second ground for giving comrade Zaslow's application special treatment, is that he is not a new applicant, b ut has left the party twice before, and as some comrades are being told, "the party is not

a revolving door." The impression is being circulated that comrade Zaslow is a factionalist by nature and addicted to splitting! In any case, this is a serious matter that need s to be dealt with, and I am not adequatley prepared to represent Milt's views or defend his positions of 20 years ago. These questions can only be answered by comrade Zaslow. That is why I proposed to the branch that Milt be invited to reply to questions that comrades may have regarding this whole period. I think it was a reasonable request, but it was rejectd. I therefore put some questions to comrade Zaslow, and asked him to make his reply in writing so that it could be made available to the comrades. Only a fool would take sides in a controversy without hearing both sides.

The next argument used against accepting Milt into the party is over the concept of collaboration. The report states, "Just as we found fundamental disagreement on the question of criteria for membership, here we found fundamental disagreement on the concept of collaboration." Is this new a new criteria for membership? People have to agree on the concept of collaboration before they can join our party? And where is this official concept of collaboration written? And who wrote it? Will this understanding of the "fundamental" concept of collaboration be added by the committe to the constitution? According to Oscar's interprtation, which he assumes is the official version, Milt was to have "all the obligations of membership without many of the rights," but was never told this!

As Milt points out in the transcript, he consulted with Dan on all questions that arose and tried to work in concert, and complete solidarity with the party. As to the contention in the report that according to Zaslow we agreed upon work in NPAC as the sole basis for collaboration,that too is simply a distortion of the facts. Let me read you Milt's account of that: "Ihad various meetings with Dan and there were no suggestions made as to ways of collaborating, or proposals for collaborating, or prodedures for collaborating, which I took exception to, or didn't carry out. I would have been perfectly happy to find other avenues, and other means, and so forth, of collaborating. Or taken other assignments if such were indicated."

Now then, all this talk about"fundamental disagreement" over the concept of collaboration is just a bunch of nonsense. At most, what was involved was a misunderstanding, not a "fundamental disagreement," i.e., the party leadership never made this clear to Milt, if indeed, anyone understood it that way. Now, what was Dan's impresssion of this period? During th interview he lists numerous things which he says, in his opinion, were important parts of the collaboration, e.g., Milt going to Oberlin, reading th bulletins on the International and the situation in the SWP, etc. After naming these areas of collaboration, Dan says, "I consider that the essence of the thing. To see how close we were coming in term s of our political conceptions, and that the work was of less importance. Let me state, <u>we just see it differently, which I don't think is that big a deal.</u>" Well there you have it comrades, on the one hand it's no big deal, and on the other hand, it's a "fundamental difference." The disagreement, it seems is between the sub-committee members themselves, over the importance of this whole matter. Nevertheless, the report felt the need to dwell on this point, and states that the outcome of theis "diffenence", led to many non-collaborative activities on the part of Zaslow.

Let's see what these "non-collaborative" activities were. First, they say, Milt endorse Marge Buckley for district attorney. Marge, as you know, is a member of Peace and Freedom, and the party did not endorse her candidacy. The Peace and Freedom party is a petty-bourgeois, reformist party, which, I'm sure, no one here would classify as a capitalist party, in the same way as we would the democratic or republican

parties, or else why would we have asked them to endorse our candidates? There's no principle involved in offering critical support to a petty-bourgeois, or radical candidate. The party has done it many times in the past, and in any case, it's just a tactical question. Nevertheless, Milt did endorse Marge's candidacy, 3 or 4 months before he entered the period of formal collaboration. One of the comrades on the committee pointed out ot Milt, that although he isn't bound by discipline, endorsement was contrary to our policy, and it would have been better had he discussed it with the organizer. This is just another case of tryingto make a mountain out of a molehill.

In the period before Milt applied, (May) there was no discussion about collaboration. No one would have expected to consult about such a thing. He didn't consult about it later because it never entered his mind, since this "endorsement" was the entire extent of his connection with the Buckley campaign.

Next the report turns to an incident that occured during the April 22 ACTION. There was disagreement between comrade Zaslow and the party on the approach we were taking towards certain leader of the Chicano community. This, you understand, was the one and only case shere comrade Zaslow took a different position from the party's in NPAC, in a whole year of collaboration. As comrades remember, the Stalinists had whipped up anti-NPAC feelings among certain blacks and Chicano's, with accusations that ;we were racist, etc. This so-called third world block, headed by Irving Sarnoff, the noted "third-worlder", was going to fight racism in NPAC. The Stalinists has succeedd in making alliances with leaders in the Chicano community, including RUP. But when certain key leaders in the Chicano community, realized that NPAC was not going to be pressured into changing the characterof the demonstration, from anti-war to anti-deportation, they broke withe the Stalinists and made a direct approcah to NPAC for an alliance, demanding only that the Chicano contingent b e first in the march. This led to the disagreement.

Now, I was working full time for NPAC during this whole period, so therefore I was present at meetins where this disagreement took place. The party wanter to demand conditions, guarantees, etc., before it would agree, which would have unquestionably led to a rupture between the Chicano leaders and NPAC, and would have pushed them right back into the camp of the Stalinists. It was clear that the Stalinists aim was to smash April 22. In fact, we couldn't even rule out the possibility of a direct attack on the demonstration itself. Milt proposed to accept this sole demand that they be the lead-off contingent, while at the same time, taking all security measures ;to safeguard the platform. The party insisted that Pedro Arias, one of the leading figures in the Chicano community, was a Stalinist. That he wanted to be at the head of the march, so he could, seize the platform and take over the demonstration. Aswe know, exactly the opposite took place. Pedro Arias, a long with Raul Ruiz, did indeed leap on the platform, not to sabotage the demonstration, but to save it, by restraining some Chicano ultr-lefts who rushed the stage. What Milt proposed, was that the party take a more positive approach towards these community leaders, which, is in fact what we did. As a result, we ended up, on April 22, with a substantial Chicano contingent leading the march. Furthermore, we avoided a situation which, in the final analysis, would have resulted in such tremendous animosity towards the party, that any plans we had of doing work in the Chicano community, would have been seriously ;hampered, at least in the foreseeable future. Now, I think, even the committee would agree, that this whole matter was really a minor disagreement of tactics, and although they raise it in their report, they don't place much emphasis on it.

However, Milt raises a point in the interview, regarding his relationship to NPAC and the party, which I feel is more valid, and which I wantto touch on breifly. In the report, comrade Harry is quoted as saying that "it's easy to support our line on the small things, but the big test of collaboration comes around the large important issues." And in the interview, he asks Milt why he felt it was necessary to disagree over this question in NPAC. This is Milt's answer: "I think that the party, in that situation, should have invite me to participate in the fraction meetings. This is not necessarily contrary to procedure. As a matter of fact, we know, Jesus Mena was invited and did participate in the Chican fraction meetins, for some time. He was not a memb er anymore than I was. It would have been very beneficial all around to the collaboration, it would have given me an opportunity, since I had a great responsibility in the situation, it would have given me an opportunity, at least, to influence the policies that I was taking responsibility for. In that situation, had I not carried in the fraction, I obviously would have abided by the discipline and carried out the party's decision, wrong though I thought it was. But under circumstances, where I lack the opportunity to influence it at all, to begin with, then I felt I had no choice." I think the point ought to be made, that even this occured before Milt's application, and the period of collabortion.

Alright, now the next case of a "non-collaborative" act, was the study group at Milt's house. Let me just inject a brief history of this study group. In Friends of the Panthers, which later became Liberation Union, a major requirement for membership was regualr attendance at a weekly study group. We always did, and still do, place a great emphasis on the importance of Marxist education. After most of us joined The party, Milt and Edith, and a few close friends, who remained out, decided to continue an informal study group. The first subject they studied, was Introduction to Marxist Economics, by Mandel, a very non-controversial subject. When they finished this, they considered several possibilites of what to study next, and finally decided on the national question. The motivation behind this, was that Jesus Mens, one of the members of the class, felt that because of his deep involvement in Chican activities, he was particularly interested in studying the national question. There were no strong feelings, one way or another, so that's what they studied. Now obviously, Milt did not try to conceal this class, because the way Dan learned about it was, Milt told him! As I EXPLAIned earlier in my report, Milt did not arrive at a different position from the party's on the national question, so all this talk about "double-recruiting" is simply ludicrous.

Now, the committee really had to dig deep to come up with this next bit of trivia. According to the report, Milt went to Europe and poked his nose into political problems where he had no right to do so. Also, he had the "brass" to recomment to the English tendency minority that they dissolve their tendency; plus, he took it upon himself to advise a leading member of the International. In the first place, it's simply not true, as we will see. and, secondly, immediately upon his return, Milt met with the organizers and gave a full report of his trip. Apparently in never entered their minds to find anything reprehensible with this then. In fact, Dan found it extremely interesting and informative, and considered it so important, that he proposed that a special meeting be calle of local NC members, where Milt could give a full report of his trip.

Once again, let's go back to the transcript, so we can get a clear picture of this "international scandal". During his visit to Belgium, comrade Zaslow had a lengthy discussion with comrade Ernest Mandel. Most of the time was spent arguing with Mandel over the question of

guerilla warfare in Latin America, terrorism, and the danger to the world movement of ultra-leftism. Milt supports the party's position on these points, as against the positions of Mandel and the majority of the F.I. In his own words Milt stated: "But what is important, is that I made it very clear from the beginning, that I was there simply as an individual, an dindependent sympathizer of the party, with no authorization, withour speaking for the party or officially discussing these questions. Mostly getting infomation on their views, in the course, no doubt, expressing a few of my own, and thats it."

Now then, as to this absurd charge that he advised comrade Mandel as to what the SWP would do if a pro-guerill warfare line was approved by the world congress, this is what M:ilt says: "So I said to him, now, of course, I'm not amember of the party, but I I would judge, speaking solely for myself, I would judge that the SWP would find it very difficult ;toaccept and promulgate the views held by you and the majority, on the question of Latin America and so on, and in that sense, carry out the discipline of the World Congress." Now where is this so-called "advice", other than in the minds of the committee members themselves.

Next, the report contends, that Milt had the "brass" to recommend that the English minority dissolve its tendency, which, as we know, has now become a faction. What is true, is that it seemed to Milt that this minority, wh;ich is tiny and isolated, (16 out of 400) was cutting its elf off by forming a faction, with no apparent benefit - especially since there were serious disputes developing within the majority, in which they were not participating. No doubt, that in asking the minority leadership what their reasons were for maintaining a faction, Milt's impressions or inclinations came through with the ;questions. So What? One has to view these things with a certain sense of proprortion. Would we expect someone, who is not only political person, but a loyal supporter of the international Trotskyist movement, to go to Europe, and not acquaint himself with the problems of the movement? Is that really what was expectd of Milt? If so, then why did we furnish him with the cocuments relating to the international disputes? Why did Dan give him a letter of introduction to leading comrades over there? Either we expected him to talk politics or we didn't. If we did then dowe think it's possible to engage in discussion and somehow refrain from revealing an opinion? And if we didn't, then that should have been made clear to him, and it wasn't. It wasn't, precisely because, as I stated earlier, this was not our intentions. We didn't consider it incorrect then, and now it's being dragged in as just another reason for keeping Milt out of the party .

The report proceeds now to the next case: "Let us consider the"53 fight in the party. In our 2 interviews with Zaslow, he stated that he didn't think.., a rehashing of the '53 fight was relevant." This is significant, the report claims. Why? Because according to them, Milt felt compelled to organize a counter class on his version of the split, in answer to the one given by Andrea during the '72 summer school. But wht is important, They say, is not simply that he had this class, but that his analysis of the split is different from the party's. Now what was this so-call "counter class", as the report refers to it. How was it organized and what was its purpose? During the interview, Milt described it in the following manner: "The purpose was to give the people an opportunity to learn what the viewsof the opposition were, and for what they're worth, the benefit of my evaluation of that fight 20 years later, which I thought was necessary, to round out the education on that point." The report states that this class, whcich, by the way, was not a class. It was an informal meeting, in which Milt read from the major opposition documents, exactly what the minoritys

position was, which was followed by a healthy discussion inwhich comrades, who were there, raised numerous questions, which, in my opinion indicated a sincere desire, on their part, to hear from one of the principle leaders of the dispute, exactly what their position was. In Fact at the very next branch meeting, Dan reported that this meeting was extremely interesting and informative, and inspired comrades to go back and read the documents. But the report states, nevertheless, that this was just another example of a non-collaborative act. Do they mean by that this was done without full consultation and agreement from the organizer? If so, then they're simply mistaken. During the interview, Milt stated that precisely because this fell within the period of collaboration, in his own words: "I must have spoken to Dan like ten times, in the course of this thing, and didn't make a single move without complete approval...As I say, It was done with approval, I wouldn't have done it otherwise. In fact the organizer was present." I should think that clarifies this whole "counter class" episode. There was not a single objection raise at that time, so why is it dragged in now?

But the matter does not end there. The sub-committee believes it has comrade Zaslow in a real contradiction. Why? First he says he doesn't want to rehash the '53 fight, and then he says he wants to present his views in answer to the officail party version. There is, of course, no contradiction at aLL. Milt says he doesn't want to debate the mAtter. That's not the same as saying he wants a one-sided debate, or that he would ignore an attack against him! Even then, the point is that Milt never suggested theat ;he re-open the Cochcran fight. On the contrary, it is the committee who has re-opened it. All Milt said, was that if if he were in the party, and there were a class on the '53 split, in a branch where he was a member, hne felt it would be of educational value for comrades to hear his evaluation of that struggle. But, he also said, that if the party decided against this, he just wouldn't do it! That's all! Now can you conclude from that, That Milt wants to re-open the discussion, and further, that he is against demo cratic centralism, as the report contends?

It should be noted that during the interview Milt told the committee, that looking back, h e would have to admithe was wrong about a number of things. Most important was his incorrect estimate that the party was hopeless, in the sense that it had become ossified and was incapable of developing into a vital movement. In the transcript, Milt states: "The party proved to have more vitality and more ability to meet new situations and respond to them politically, in a correct way, and respond to situations organizationally, in meeting its responsibilities, in building the anti-war movement for example, and it's shown a dynamism that we clearly did not see in the party. So I think that we were wrong about that...I think the party has made g reat strides I think it has a future, etc.

But that's not enough for our sub-committee. And here I think we get to the real heart of the matter. What this whole episode "revealed" to them, was that Milt was still a "Cochranite" and, "that he hasn't learned a thing." The only conclusion you can draw from this whole thing, is that the committee wants Milt to repent and recant, nothing less, say he was 100% wrong in '53, and then, maybe, we'll consider letting him bakc in. Well, all I can say is that this is not the tradition in our party. In the same speech by comrade Cannon which I quoted from before, he quotes Trotsky as saying: "That party member who changes his opinion at command is a scoundrel. He meant by that, that such a member is disloyal to the party; because The least the party can expect from the most inexperienced, the newest rank-and-file member is that he be honest with party, tell the party honestly what he thinks, and not change his opinion when he gets the command from this or that

leader, or this or That committee."

Next I want to deal with the charge that Milt's politics are characterized by his impressionism, short cuts, and get rich quick schemes. Supposing it were true - the purpose of theis meeting is not to decide on the correct tactical norms for the party, but on Milt's membership. Are not these questions debatable in our party? Since the report givesa a distorted version of his views, they should be set straight. Milt believes in aggressive intervention - real intervention - not just selling literature - into leftward moving currents, and early, while they are in motion and susceptible to influence, fighting all opponenets for leadership. This means assigning comrades to work in such organizations, to develop a revolutionary wing, circulate our press, distribute our campaign literature, make contacts, and recruit to th e party. This he believes is the best way to build our partyh and at the same time to weaken our opponents., The report refers to Milt's activity in Peace & Freedom and LU as examples of his "impressionistic" politics. Well, we former members of these two organizations, are examples of what one isolated ;comrade could accomplish in terms of recruiting. Is it not possible to assume that an organized fraction, with a party and press behind them, could have multiplied this many times? Now I repeat, we are not deciding on the merits of these views, we are deciding whether a comrade with these views is admissable to the party.

This leads to the part in the report, where they refer to the formation of the international Left Opposition, and the basis on which groups were selected. I am not familiar with that period, but from Trotsky's general approach; I am absolute certain that his criteria was agreement on fundamental political principles, not on tactical considerations. But the expulsion of the Left Opposition illuminates the problem in an entirely different way. For 5 years Trotsky and his comrades fought to get back inot the Stalinized Communist Internatinal. The differences were 1000 times greater than this situation, yet Trotsky insisted that the criticisms ;of the Left Opposition were fully compatible with membership. The Stalinists denied it. I'm sure there were clever functionaries among them who asked: if you think we're so terrible, why would you want to be in such a bureaucratic, monolithic, revisionist party? And also, some cynical ones who said, you want to come in and change our ways; well, we like things the way they are; we don't want to change; and wouldn't we be soft headed liberal fools to let you in now that we have you safely out? The tone of Tratsky's reply is not hard to imagine!

This brings me to the final point. I was not at Oberlin last August, but comrades, who sere, reported that, during one of his talks comrade Jack Barnes said: "If there's no room in the International for the English minority and the PST, there's no room for the SWP." Now by the logic of our sub-committee, why would The international leadership accept the PST, since this would strengthen the position of those who want to change the line of the International?. Wouldn't that be liberal of them? Why let anyone in, who has differences and wants to change things. The issues in dispute there, are far deeper than comrade Zaslow's with the SWP. Does the committee suggest that we should have a double standard? Fight against exclusion where we are in aminority, e.g. in the international situation, and then take the opposite position when we are in the majority? And if ;there is no room for Milt, in the party, the question obviously arises, is there room for those who agree with his criticsisms? Or for anybody who has any serious criticisms? The issue goes far beyond the question of Milt's membership. So, let us be very clear about what we are debating her today.

What we are debating is the kind of party we are building. Are we

building a party founded on basic Marxist-Leninist principlxes, made up of the most"audacious iconoclasts...setting itself the task of overthrowing the world...wher the leadership relies upon a seething democracy" for its support, as Trotsky describes Lenin's party? Or, are we building a party where unanimity on all questions is the norm; in which the "model" member is one sho always agrees; in which unanimity is enforce by barring dissent from crossing the borders of the party? These are the issues in dispute today comrades. What kind of a party are we building? Are we so weak, so lacking in confidence, that we cannot handle one lone person, whom we all agree is a revolutionary Trotskyist, whohas some ideas about how best to build the party? Is it so inconceivable that he might have some ideas we might profit from? And, if not, can't we just vote them down? Why this fear, this panic, at the prospect of this comrade, who is really one of us, becoming a member?

Comrades, I urge all of you to give serious consideration to this matter. I sincerely believe, that if we wlcome comrade Zaslow into our party, not only will we have reaffirmed and strengthend the Leninist tradition of party democracy, but gained a valuable, loyal and dedicated party builder as well. Therefore, I Propose that we recommend to the P.C. that Milt Zaslow be readmitted to membership in the SWP.